

**NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:**

News media contacts: Ethan Huffman, 208-526-0660, [ethan.huffman@inl.gov](mailto:ethan.huffman@inl.gov)  
proSWAT Inc. contact: Sven Evers, 208-941-9335, [severs@proswat.com](mailto:severs@proswat.com)

**Note to editors/news directors:** B-roll footage is available by contacting Ethan Huffman at (208) 526-0660.

## **INL's Breaching Shotgun licensed for production by Boise company**

Federal, state and local law enforcement agencies often rely on sophisticated tactical equipment to save lives during high-risk operations such as hostage rescues and drug raids. Soon, police agencies across the country will have another tool to rely on – the Breaching Shotgun.

Designed and developed by engineers at the U.S. Department of Energy's Idaho National Laboratory, the Breaching Shotgun is a combination of two firearms in one – a 12-gauge shotgun used to blast away door knobs or hinges, and a powerful rifle to deter and detain suspects. Boise, Idaho-based proSWAT, Inc. has signed an exclusive license with the laboratory to manufacture the firearm.

"We feel that the Breaching Shotgun will ultimately help save lives by allowing law enforcement officers a better option when they have to enter a structure during a crisis situation," said proSWAT, Inc. founder Sven Evers. "Our goal is to make this firearm a trusted tool for the entire law enforcement and military communities."

The Breaching Shotgun was a collaborative project that involved several engineers and designers within the lab's National and Homeland Security Division. Each member of the team had a specific expertise from firearm design to law enforcement policy. The original proposal called for development of a multifunctional breaching shotgun that could be attached to the frame of a standard issue M4 or MP5 rifle. It also required that the shotgun's trigger be front-mounted, allowing the user the ability to fire both weapons simultaneously.

Designers spent more than a year developing the firearm into a functioning model that met all the requirements, including a non-lethal element that allows users to fire bean bags, rubber bullets or tear gas from the shotgun chamber. Once a prototype firearm was complete, federal law enforcement agents, local police and INL security personnel tested it.

"The feedback from officers has been very positive," said co-designer Steve Frickey. "They like the versatility of the firearm's two-in-one design which saves them crucial seconds when they have to enter a building by force."

According to Frickey, before the Breaching Shotgun, it took at least two officers to knock down a door – one officer using a separate breaching firearm to remove the knob or hinges, and a second officer to step in during the raid. With this design, one officer has the ability to both breach a door and still have a functioning firearm for protection.

The Breaching Shotgun has five U.S. patents pending for its design. It is expected to be introduced to military and law enforcement markets in late 2005. The project was initially funded by DOE's Applied Technology Program.

A portion of royalties from the licensing of the firearm will return to INL to support future research activities. The inventors also will earn some of the royalties.

Idaho National Laboratory is one of the Department of Energy's 10 multiprogram national laboratories. The laboratory performs work in each of the strategic goal areas of DOE – energy, national security, science and environment. More specifically, INL is the nation's leading center of nuclear energy research and development. Day-to-day management and operation of the laboratory is the responsibility of Battelle Energy Alliance.

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